

EXTRACT

Day trip to Agra

a short play

by

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Characters

TOM

SIMONE

SAMIR

Setting

Outside a Mosque in Agra, India. A stinking hot day in June.

Time

Around midday.

Day trip to Agra

Outside a Mosque. Agra. Off season.

TOM: (ENTERING) 30 bucks! 30 bucks!

SIMONE: (FOLLOWING) It's okay.

TOM: It's not okay. The little prick charged me 30 bucks – for what? Lay some cloth on a piece of cement and sprinkle some flowers.

SIMONE: You forgot the string.

TOM: *And* tie some red string around the marble. Don't forget that. Can't forget that. And the look he gives me.

SIMONE: Who?

TOM: The guy who laid the cloth. As if I'm some kind of halfwit: "What are you doing here?" More like "You know you just paid 30 bucks for this?" 30 bucks! Our car and driver for the whole day costs less than that.

SIMONE: And how much does it cost to park your car in a city carpark back home?

TOM: That's not the point.

SIMONE: And the dinner you took me to before we left.

TOM: I thought you liked it. You said you liked it.

SIMONE: I did. But that's not the point. It's 30 bucks.

TOM: Exactly! Three wishes. He said - three wishes! And he blessed me. Blesses me, then he rips me off. It's all a set up. That bloody guide. It's his fault. Takes us to him, sets us up then rips us off.

SIMONE: You asked to buy the cloth.

TOM: I didn't know how much it cost.

SIMONE: He was just doing what you asked.

TOM: I didn't know. He should've warned me. (SEEING SOMETHING) Here he comes. Probably been divvying up the loot. I'll show him. Bloody thief.

SIMONE: (TRYING TO STOP HIM) Tom. Stop. No, Tom!

BUT **TOM** FORCES HIS WAY OFF. HE RETURNS MOMENTS LATER DRAGGING **SAMIR**. HE HURLS HIM TO THE GROUND.

TOM TAKES OUT HIS WALLET. HE CHUCKS THE MONEY DOWN ON **SAMIR**.

TOM: There you go. Take it. Take it all. Bloody crook.

SIMONE TRIES TO HELP **SAMIR** UP.

SIMONE: Tom – stop it.

TOM: We come to this country – as guests. Try to do the right thing. And what do you do? Rip us off!

SAMIR: You are unhappy with me?

TOM: Too right I'm unhappy. In my country we believe in fair's fair. And I don't mind paying for that. But there's one thing we don't like. Being ripped off.

SAMIR: What is –

TOM: Don't play all innocent. You know what I'm talking about. 30 bucks he got from me. 30 bucks! To lay some piece of cloth on a slab of cement.

SAMIR: But you –

TOM: I don't care what I said. You should've told me. Warned me. "No sir – not go here. Bad man." But you led me over like a grinning idiot. What's your cut eh?

SIMONE: Tom – you stop this. I'm your wife and you are embarrassing me. It's not Samir's fault.

TOM: He's the bloody guide. (TO **SAMIR**) So – *guide!*

SIMONE: And his name is Samir. Use it. You asked him to buy the cloth so he showed you where to buy the cloth. He was just doing what you asked.

BEAT. **TOM** IS SILENT.

SIMONE: Now you apologise and just hope Samir has it in his heart to leave it at that.

BEAT.

SIMONE: Tom – please. For me.

TOM: Sorry Samir. It's just - 30 bucks.

SAMIR: You ask.

TOM: I know. My fault. My bad. I'm ...

SIMONE: My husband is very sorry. (COLLECTING MONEY) Take this.
Hopefully it will make up for it.

SIMONE GIVES THE MONEY TO SAMIR. SAMIR BOBS HIS HEAD. HE LOOKS AT TOM. HE EXITS.

TOM: What does that head thing even mean?

SIMONE: Lots of things. Yes. No. I understand. Leave me alone you crazy Australian.

BEAT.

TOM: How much you –

SIMONE: Don't even ask.

BEAT. **TOM SITS.**

TOM: Come over here. In the shade.

SIMONE: I don't know if I want to be near you right now.

TOM: Please.

BEAT. **SIMONE SITS, A SHORT DISTANCE FROM TOM.**

SIMONE: You know the funniest thing. They probably recycle the cloths.

TOM: What?

SIMONE: At the end of the day they just fold them up, put them back into the bags and sell them to the next sap. So you didn't even buy the cloth. You just rented it.

TOM: No wonder their religion has such a bad name.

SIMONE: And you've never put money in the collection plate at church.

TOM: Not 30 bucks. (BEAT) I just wanted everything to be perfect.